

Monroe County has much to offer both visitors and residents. Monroe County, named for President James Monroe, was founded on February 23, 1821. It is comprised of 19 towns, 10 villages and the City of Rochester, the third largest city in the state, with a combined population of approximately 750,000 residents and a land area of 663.21 square miles. In 1998, the City of Rochester, located in Monroe County, was one of ten communities in the nation to receive the All American City award as a great place to live.

Rochester and Monroe County are also wonderful places to visit, offering plenty of activities to enjoy. Monroe County offers residents and visitors alike a wide variety of parks, festivals, sporting events, arts, culture, history and much more!

The world-renowned [International Museum of Photography & Film and George Eastman](#) House is actually two museums in one. This 12.5-acre estate in the heart of Rochester's cultural district combines the treasures of the world's leading museum of photography and film with the regal pleasures of the landmark mansion and gardens of Kodak founder George Eastman.

Monroe County hosts many beautiful and functional bodies of water. One can experience the charm and history of the Erie Canal or the power of the Genesee River. One of the largest bodies of water is the impressive Lake Ontario, a freshwater lake almost the size of New Jersey.

Rochester is said to have more golf holes per capita than any other industrial city in the Northeast. In summer 2003, Rochester hosted the 85th Annual PGA Championship at Oak Hill Country Club.

In 1888, nurserymen George Ellwanger and Patrick Barry endowed the Rochester community with 20 acres of gently rolling hills that are now known as Highland Park. The park is a skillfully landscaped display of shrubs and trees and is considered to be one of the nation's first municipal arboretums. Renowned park designer Frederick Law Olmstead was responsible for final development of Highland Park. Among his other accomplishments was the design of New York City's famous Central Park.

Each May, the [Lilac Festival](#) is held in Rochester's Highland Park, harkening back to when

Rochester was known as the Flower City.

The park's 1,200 lilac bushes are comprised of more than 500 varieties, from deep purple to pure white. They cover 22 of Highland Park's 155 acres. John Dunbar planted the first lilacs at Highland Park in 1892. Dunbar's successor, Bernard H. Slavin, built Highland Park's Lilac Collection into the largest in the world. Each year, over 250,000 people come to the [Corn Hill](#) city neighborhood for the annual Corn Hill Arts Festival. Traditionally held the weekend after the Fourth of July, this exciting two-day summer festival plays host to over 500 of the country's finest artists and craftsperson. From pottery to paintings, woodworking to sculptures, textiles to jewelry, this festival has it all. The festival nationally recognized as one of the Top 200 festivals in the country by

Sunshine Artist Magazine

In November, Rochester hosts the High Falls Film Festival. The annual international film festival is already on the map as one of the most exciting festivals of work created by women behind the camera in the United States. The festival goes beyond the actors and directors, who usually receive the lion's share of attention, to celebrate the work of women in all positions: producers, cinematographers, production designers, screenwriters, editors, composers and stuntwomen. This is a perfect fit considering the women's suffrage movement was started nearby in [Seneca Falls](#),

and one can still visit the home of

[Susan B. Anthony](#)

in downtown Rochester.

Monroe County and Rochester continue to host major companies that keep the county, state and national economy strong. Among them are Kodak, Xerox, Bausch & Lomb, and Paychex. A Rochester favorite is Wegmans, a world-renowned grocery store.